

HEADQUARTERS
 UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM
 APO San Francisco 96307

GENERAL ORDERS
 NUMBER 2474

26 April 1966

AWARD OF THE SILVER STAR

1. TC 320. The following AWARD is announced.

HAWTHORNE, GENE SERGEANT E5 United States Army
 Co A, 2d Bn (Abr.), 502d Inf, 1st Sde, 101st Abr. Div, APO US Forces 96347

Awarded: Silver Star

Date action: 9 December 1965 to 10 December 1965

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason: For gallantry in action: Sergeant Hawthorne distinguished himself from 9 December 1965 to 10 December 1965 while serving as patrol leader of a squad size element during a reconnaissance mission in "War Zone D", Republic of Vietnam. After successfully infiltrating into Viet Cong territory, Sergeant Hawthorne's patrol was to remain in place until they were covered by the forward movement of friendly troops. Despite the skill and experience of the patrol, they were discovered after several hours and engaged by a Viet Cong platoon. Sergeant Hawthorne and his patrol immediately switched their M-16 rifles to automatic and repelled the attack. After two more encounters with the insurgent troops, Sergeant Hawthorne was seriously wounded in both arms by fragments from a booby trap that killed one of his men. After unsuccessfully persuading his men to leave him behind, he directed his assistant in the formation of a defensive perimeter. Sergeant Hawthorne continued to direct his assistant through two more vicious attempts to destroy the patrol. Realizing that his patrol had been cut down to three effective fighting men, Sergeant Hawthorne demanded that he be placed in a firing position. Although he was only semi-conscious and could only see a few meters ahead, Sergeant Hawthorne, with complete disregard for his personal safety, held his position throughout the last assault and delivered deadly fire into the attacking Viet Cong. Summoning the last of his strength, he pinpointed the patrol's position for an artillery battery, and helped his assistant adjust the incoming rounds by the sounds of the bursts. Through his courage and outstanding leadership, the insurgents were forced to withdraw, and a Viet Cong regimental base camp was discovered and subsequently destroyed. Sergeant Hawthorne's extraordinary heroism in close combat against a numerically superior hostile force was in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

Authority: By direction of the President under the provisions of the Act of Congress, approved 9 July 1918.